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NEWMARKET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST SUFFOLK.



R E P O R T


of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the Year

1940.

ROBERT H. CLAYTON, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.



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Public Health Offices,

Westgate House,

13, Westgate Street,

Bury St. Edmunds.

January, 1942.

To:-

The Chairman and Members of the

Urban District Council of Newmarket,

in the County of West Suffolk.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Boccock & Gentlemen,

Herewith I beg to submit for your favourable consideration my fifth Annual Report as Medical Officer of Health being for the year ended December 31st, 1940.

Except in the case of items for which full particulars are required by the Minister of Health the report has been limited on his instructions, owing to the War.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Boccock & Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ROBT. H. CLAYTON,

M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.,

also Medical Officer of Health Cosford,
Mildenhall, Thedwastre and Thingoe
Rural Districts and

Assistant County Medical Officer of Health -
West Suffolk.

SANITARY INSPECTOR. F.B. Waterfall, Cert. S.I.B., H.S.I.A.,
also Surveyor & Shops Inspector.

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTOR. H.W. Jefford, Cert. S.I.B., H.S.I.A.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS and SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

1. GENERAL STATISTICS.

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Area | ... | ... | 5,640 acres. | | |
| | <u>1940</u> | <u>1939</u> | <u>1938</u> | <u>1937</u> | <u>1936</u> |
| Registrar General's estimate of the resident population mid-year | X 9420 ^H (a) (b) 9202 | 9082 | 9207 | 9330 | 9400 |
| Number of inhabited houses at end of year according to Rate Book | X 2805 | 2812 | 2809 | 2795 | 2790 |
| Rateable Value | £72,000 | £72,426 | £72,531 | £72,018 | £71,889. |
| Sum represented by a Penny Rate | £268 | £269 | £268 | £268 | £269 |
| H (a) for the calculation of Birth Rates (b) for the calculation of Death Rates or the incidence of notifiable diseases. | | | | | |

The War's curtailment of training and breeding of bloodstock and the slaughter of many thoroughbreds might have caused much unemployment in Newmarket - in actual fact none exists, the population having been diverted to work of national importance.

2. EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <u>1940</u> | <u>1939</u> | <u>1938</u> | <u>1937</u> | <u>1936</u> |
| <u>Live Births.</u> | | | | | |
| Legitimate (I.M.) Total | 104 | 86 | | | |
| " Males | 45 | 35 | | | |
| " Females | 59 | 51 | | | |
| Illegitimate (I.M.) Total | 6 | 5 | | | |
| " Males | 1 | 2 | | | |
| " Females | 5 | 3 | | | |
| Legitimate (B.R.) Total | 94 | 86 | 102 | 98 | 101 |
| " Males | 38 | 35 | 53 | 52 | 58 |
| " Females | 56 | 51 | 49 | 46 | 43 |
| Illegitimate (B.R.) Total | 6 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 5 |
| " Males | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| " Females | 5 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 91 | 110 | 106 | 106 |
| Males | 39 | 37 | 56 | 55 | 59 |
| Females | 61 | 54 | 54 | 51 | 47 |
| Live males per 100 live females born | 64 | 70 | 104 | 108 | 126 |

Little reason can be found in the above figures to explain why a large proportion of babies born in war time are males.

| | <u>1940</u> | <u>1939</u> | <u>1938</u> | <u>1937</u> | <u>1936</u> | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----|
| <u>Stillbirths.</u> | I.H. B.R. | | | | | |
| Legitimate. Total | 5 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | |
| Males | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| Females | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | |
| Illegitimate. Total | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | |
| Birth Rate. Newmarket | 10.6 | 10.2 | 11.9 | 11.4 | 11.3 | |
| England & Wales | 14.6 | 15.0 | 15.1 | 14.7 | 14.8 | |
| Stillbirth Rate (Newmarket) per 1000 total (live and still) births | 43.5 | 42.1 | 17.9 | 18.5 | 27.5 | |
| <u>DEATHS.</u> | Total | 109 | 101 | 133 | 107 | 106 |
| Males | 59 | 55 | 80 | 52 | 59 | |
| Females | 50 | 46 | 53 | 55 | 47 | |

Death Rate per 1000
Resident Population.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Newmarket. | Crude | 11.6 | 11.0 | 14.4 | 11.5 | 11.3 |
| | Corrected | 9.6 | 9.7 | 12.7 | 10.1 | 9.9 |
| England & Wales | | 14.3 | 12.1 | 12.4 | 12.4 | 12.1 |

In 1940 there were no maternal deaths (Headings 29 & 30).

5 deaths (all in the first 5 days of life) of infants under 1 year of age occurred. (3 males and 2 females - including 1 illegitimate male).

Seven other deaths occurred in the nonage - four males (8 yrs Diphtheria, 9 yrs Rheumatism, 15 yrs Diabetes, 17 yrs Thrown from horse) and three females (1 yr Pneumonia, 5 yrs Rheumatism and 20 yrs Appendicitis).

Death Rate of Infants under 1 year.

| | <u>1940</u> | <u>1939</u> | <u>1938</u> | <u>1937</u> | <u>1936</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| All infants per 1000 live births | 45.5 | 54.9 | 54.5 | 28.3 | 36.7 |
| Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate births | 37.9 | 46.5 | 49.0 | 30.6 | 37.7 |
| Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate births | 166.7 | 200.0 | 125.0 | Nil | Nil |
| Deaths from Cancer (all ages) | 13 | 16 | 20 | 21 | 14 |
| Deaths from Measles | Nil | 1 | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| " " Whooping Cough | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| " " Diarrhoea (under 2 years) | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |

On the following page is a table giving the causes and the number of deaths occurring at the various age groups. The totals correspond with the Registrar General's figures. Only direct comparison between totals for "All Causes" in previous years is possible - not between totals for individual causes - as, for 1940, the deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged list of Causes, as used in England & Wales & Northern Ireland, as set out on Page XXXIX of the Manual of the International List of Causes of Deaths - 1938.

| CAUSES OF DEATHS. | | Deaths at the sub-joined ages of "RESIDENTS" whether occurring in or beyond District. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---------------|---|----------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|----|----------------|----|--------------------------------|----|
| | | Under 1 year | | 1 and under 5 | | 5 and under 15 | | 15 and under 25 | | 25 and under 45 | | 45 and under 65 | | 65 and upwards | | Registrar General's Figures | |
| | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| M = Male F = Female | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Cerebro-Spinal Fever | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| 5 | Diphtheria | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| 6 | Tuberculosis of Respiratory System. | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| 9 | Influenza | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| 13 | Cancer of buc:cav: & oesoph (M) uterus (F) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - |
| 14 | Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - |
| 15 | Cancer of Breast | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - |
| 16 | Cancer of all other Sites | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | - | 5 | 5 | - | - |
| 17 | Diabetes | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| 18 | Intracran:vasc:lesions | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 4 | - | - |
| 19 | Heart Disease | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 4 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 13 | 10 | - |
| 20 | Other Diseases of Circulatory System | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - |
| 21 | Bronchitis | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 6 | 2 | 7 | 2 | - |
| 22 | Pneumonia | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | - |
| 23 | Other Resp: Diseases | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | - | - |
| 24 | Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 26 | Appendicitis | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| 27 | Other Digestive Diseases | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | 3 | 1 | - |
| 31 | Premature Births | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| 32 | Con. mal., birth injur., infant diseases | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| 34 | Road Traffic Accidents | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - |
| 35 | Other Violent Causes | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | - |
| 36 | All other Causes | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 13 | - | - |
| TOTAL. Male | | 3 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 16 | - | 34 | - | 59 | - |
| Female | | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | 3 | - | 14 | - | 26 | - | 50 |

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

(ii)(a) LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The previous years arrangements were continued with the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service at Cambridge, under the Directorship of Dr. A. J. Downie - one indication of the great value of these services is contained in the report on Diphtheria in Section F.

- (b) AMBULANCE FACILITIES..)
- (c) NURSING IN THE HOME.) No change.
- (d) CLINICS & TREATMENT CENTRES.)
- (e) HOSPITALS.

The White Lodge Public Assistance Hospital was used throughout 1940 as an Emergency Hospital - consequently many aged and chronic sick persons have, from this Reception Area, been evacuated from the proximity of their friends and relatives.

Isolation Hospital. The Isolation Hospital had a particularly hard year, for the proximity of the new Emergency Hospital and many bodies of troops added greatly to the number of cases - our own Diphtheria epidemic further aggravated their difficulties - the District has good reason to be satisfied with the recovery rate which this hospital has maintained for many years.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1.(1) WATER.

59 samples of water were taken from the well proper and submitted for Bacteriological examination. 58 of these were satisfactory and one suspicious.

31 samples were taken from the Company's mains and all were found to be satisfactory. In conjunction with representatives of the Newmarket Water Works Company, who, throughout the year continue their valued co-operation, 17 samples of water were taken from various private wells to ascertain suitable sources for Emergency Water Supplies. 11 samples were found to be satisfactory and 6 were unsatisfactory.

(ii) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Sewage or Sewage Disposal Works have not been extended during the year. 179,200 gallons of crude gas liquor were carted by the Newmarket Gas Company to the Sewage Disposal Works and disposed of by spreading over land the site of old stone pits to prevent damage to the Sewage Disposal Works Plant and (2) POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS.

3.(1) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Except for a few isolated properties situated away from the Sewerage System all houses and premises in the District have water closets connected to the water carriage system.

(ii) PUBLIC CLEANSING.

House refuse collection is carried out by direct labour and during the year a change over from horse drawn vehicles to Mechanical Haulage was introduced and proved to be successful. A weekly collection of house refuse and shop refuse is carried out and all materials suitable for salvage are kept separate from the house refuse and sold.

During the year the total amount of refuse collected has greatly increased by reason of all available houses being occupied by Military and R.A.F. personnel. 671 lorry loads of house refuse and 351 lorry loads of trade refuse were collected.

(iii) SEMITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

During the year the Council promoted Mr. F.B. Waterfall (who has furnished the following tabular statement). Judged by his efforts and assistance to me, no one could have better merited this confidence of the Council.

INSPECTIONS.

Dwellinghouses.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of dwellinghouse inspections made under the various Acts | 276 |
| Total number of re-inspections thereof | 98 |
| Number of houses inspected after infectious diseases | 85 |

Drains.

| | |
|--|----|
| New drain tests and inspections | 25 |
| Inspections in connection with choked drains | 16 |

Various.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Slaughterhouses | 209 |
| Visits in connection with reported nuisances | 112 |
| Food shops, market stalls, etc. | 15 |
| Bakehouses | 9 |
| Factories | 56 |
| Cowsheds | 7 |
| Dairies | 7 |
| Common Lodging Houses | 8 |
| School inspections | 2 |
| Tents, vans, sheds, etc. | 1 |
| Swimming Baths | 3 |
| Shops. | 37 |
| Public Houses (Sanitary Accommodation) | 23 |

Total number of inspections in the District 995

Number of Informal Notices given in 1940 57

Outstanding Informal Notices @ 1st January 1940 Nil

Outstanding Informal Notices @ 31st December 1940 27

Number of Statutory Notices served in 1940 8

Outstanding Statutory Notices @ 1st January 1940 16

Outstanding Statutory Notices @ 31st December 1940 19

The following is a classified list of the housing defects and nuisances abated during the year:-

| | |
|---|-------|
| Dampness | 10 |
| Roofs repaired | 6 |
| Defective walls & ceilings repaired | 10 |
| Chimneys repaired | 1 |
| Windows repaired | 7 |
| Rain water pipes repaired & renewed | 4 |
| Defective W.C. pedestals renewed & repaired | 9 |
| New dustbins installed | 3 |
| Insanitary houses cleansed | 2 |
| Drain stoppages | 16 |
| Sinks installed | Nil |
| Stoves repaired | 5 |
| Floors repaired | 6 |
| Yard paving repaired | 2 |
| Doors and frames repaired | 7 |
| Stoves repaired or renewed | 5 |
| W.C. flushing cisterns repaired or renewed | 15 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 108 |
| | <hr/> |

Factory Act, 1937.

The following table summarises the number of inspections made under the Factory Act, 1937, the defects found and the action taken thereon:-

| | Inspections | Written Notices | Occupiers Prosecuted |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Factories with Mechanical Power | 34 | 4 | Nil |
| Factories without " " | 22 | 4 | Nil |
| Other Premises | - | - | Nil |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 56 | 8 | Nil |

Defects found in Factories.

Want of cleanliness in three, insufficient sanitary accommodation in two and defective sanitary accommodation in three other factories were found and remedied without needing reference to H.M. Inspector.

(iv) SHOPS & OFFICES.

37 inspections relating to the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934, were made. Notice to provide suitable and sufficient sanitary accommodation was served in one case.

(v) CAMPING SITES.

Three applications for Licence to occupy a site were made during the year and all three were refused.

(vi) SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Action has been necessary in respect of a Factory at which delay in obtaining spares for the Mechanical Stoker was experienced. The nuisance was remedied after the Mechanical Stoker had been repaired.

(vii) SWIMMING BATHS & POOLS.

There is one privately owned modern public swimming bath in the area the water for which is obtained from the public water supply and is filtered, heated and chlorinated by a suitable plant.

Frequent visits are made to ascertain that due regard is paid to the cleanliness of the baths, cubicles and towels, also costumes and sanitary conveniences.

Analyses of nine water samples taken from the bath showed in two cases that the water was not satisfactory and immediate steps were taken to remedy the conditions.

(viii) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

Five houses which had previously been treated with insecticide were found to be infested again with bugs and de-infestation was carried out by Associated Fumigators Ltd, using Hydrogen Cyanide. Two other houses found to be infested with bugs were treated with Lawvercide by the Council's workmen.

4. SCHOOLS.

The washing and sanitary arrangements at five elementary and two private schools have been inspected. One elementary school was disinfected after cases of Diphtheria.

S E C T I O N D.

H O U S I N G.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1.(1)(a) Total number of dwellinghouses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | 276 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 374 |
| (2)(a) Number of dwellinghouses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 | Nil |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | Nil |
| (3) Number of dwellinghouses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 5 |
| (4) Number of dwellinghouses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 45 |

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal notice.

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers | 19 |
|--|----|

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year.

(a) There were no proceedings under Sections 9, 10 & 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

| | |
|---|----|
| (1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 25 |
| (2) Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices | |
| (a) By Owners | 16 |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners | - |

(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.

| | |
|--|---|
| (1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | 5 |
| (2) Number of dwellinghouses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | 5 |

(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936. Nil

4. Housing Act, 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding.

| | |
|---|------------------|
| (a)(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year | 2 |
| (ii) Number of families dwelling therein | 2 |
| (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein | 17 21 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| (b) Number of cases of overcrowding reported during the year | Nil |
|--|-----|

| | |
|---|----|
| (c)(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year | 2 |
| (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases | 15 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwellinghouses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority having taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding | Nil |
|---|-----|

S E C T I O N E .

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) MILK SUPPLY.

Five samples of milk taken were submitted for bacteriological examination and were found to be satisfactory.

(b) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

From the 2nd April, 1940 the Central Slaughterhouse in the Urban District was enlarged and all the meat for the District was slaughtered there. The inspection of meat took up a considerable part of the Sanitary Inspectors' time.

Particulars of Condemned Meat etc.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------|
| Total Number of carcasses inspected | = | 7,940 |
| Total weight of condemned meat etc. | = | 15,012 lbs |

Beasts.

| | | | |
|---|-----|---------|----|
| Whole carcasses | 8 | Kidneys | 10 |
| Lungs | 112 | Tongues | 4 |
| Livers | 321 | Udders | 1 |
| Heads & Tongues | 74 | Skirts | 19 |
| Spleens | 4 | Hearts | 5 |
| Portions of beef 244 lbs. and 8 forequarters. | | | |

Calves. Whole carcasses. 2

Sheep and Lambs.

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| Whole carcasses | 19 | Lungs | 55 |
| Portions of mutton | 12lbs | Livers | 144 |
| Plucks | 112 | | |

Pigs.

| | | | |
|------------------|-------|---------|----|
| Whole carcasses | 18 | Spleens | 4 |
| Portions of Pork | 52lbs | Plucks | 16 |
| Livers | 27 | Heads | 35 |
| Messengeric Fats | 4 | | |

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

| | Cattle exclud- ing Cows | Cows | Calves | Sheep and Lambs | Pigs |
|---|-------------------------------|------|--------|-----------------------|--------|
| Number killed | | Not | known | | |
| Number inspected (All Diseases except Tuberculosis) | 1374 | | 75 | 5671 | 820 |
| Whole carcasses condemned | 1 | - | 2 | 19 | 17 |
| Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned | 344 | - | - | 230 | 70 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis | 25.11% | - | 2.67% | 4.39% | 10.60% |
| (Tuberculosis only) | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned | 7 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned | 192 | - | - | 1 | 40 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis | 14.41% | - | - | .01% | 5.00% |

(c) ADULTERATION, ETC.

(d) CHEMICAL & BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION
OF FOOD.

(e) NUTRITION

(f) SHELL-FISH (Molluscan)

No change.

S E C T I O N F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS & OTHER DISEASES.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) DURING THE YEAR, 1940.

| | Total cases noti- fied | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 45 | 65 | Cases admit- ted to Hospi- tal | Deaths. |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|---------|
| Scarlet Fever | 45 | - | - | 1 | 4 | 22 | 11 | 2 | 3 | 2 | - | - | 26 | - |
| Whooping Cough | 17 | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | 3 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Diphtheria | 48 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 19 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 2 | - | 36 | 1 |
| Erysipelas | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Measles | 24 | - | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Pneumonia | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 4 |
| Puerperal Pyrexia | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| | 140 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 10 | 52 | 24 | 10 | 17 | 6 | 2 | 64 | |

Diphtheria Epidemic.

On July 4th, 1940 a three year old boy, who had been evacuated from a bombed area only a few days before, was moved to the Isolation Hospital suffering from Diphtheria, the organisms being of Gravis Type. The previous case of Diphtheria in the Urban District (the only one up till that time in 1940) had occurred on February 2nd,.

This evacuee boy was below school age and because he had been ill since arrival in Newmarket had not, it was stated, been in contact with any Newmarket children.

Twelve days later (on July 16th) notifications of four cases of Diphtheria were received - they were all children at St. Mary's School, their ages being 8, 7, 7 and 5 years. St. Mary's School was visited that day and some 120 scholars inspected - from thirteen children showing evidence of Rhinitis or suspicious throats, swabs were taken and sent for examination to the Emergency Public Health Laboratory at Cambridge - these children meanwhile being excluded from School. Six of these thirteen children were found to be carrying Diphtheria Bacilli Gravis Type - swabs were taken from other persons in their homes and three further children were found similarly affected. Whilst these swabs were being examined four further cases of Diphtheria were notified on July 17th - three being children at St. Mary's School and one being an adult who had worked at the home of one of the six carriers found in St. Mary's School - at her home two further carriers were found.

Within 72 hours of hearing that the School was involved therefore nine cases were in hospital and eleven carriers had been identified and quarantined - moreover it had been established that one of the six carriers swabbed on July 16th was a cousin (of different surname) of the evacuee boy notified on July 4th and had been in contact with him. Thus each case was explained by a complete chain of contact and despite the fact that a quick spreading and virulent infection had been introduced into a population very susceptible, owing to absence of similar infection for so long, there was reason to hope that the spread of the disease would be checked especially as, with the consent of the Chairman of the Public Health Committee, it had been possible to offer immunisation to the immediate contacts of the cases and carriers. How nearly this hope that the epidemic would be restricted to nine cases was realised can be judged from the fact that no further case of Diphtheria Gravis occurred in Newmarket Town until October 5th, that is for eleven weeks.

There was, however, to be a tragedy - for despite adequate co-operation from the County Medical Officer, who allowed his School Nurse and Health Visitor of that District, to exercise surveillance and repeat swabs on the excluded carriers one of these children, together with his parents, who had wearied of the restraint, left St. Mary's Parish without leaving his address - nor despite repeated attempts to ascertainment was it known where he had been until a case of Diphtheria occurred in Exning Parish, at the house in which he was staying, on August 19th - thirty three days after his exclusion - 23 cases in all occurred at Exning by October 17th and a further five cases between October 5th and October 17th in Newmarket - the unbroken chain of contact was traced through them all. One case, the eight year old son of a headmaster in the Town, proved fatal.

Faced with this position the Council were advised, and agreed, to offer free immunisation to children up to school leaving age - the Ministry of Health gave approval, stipulating that details should be included in this Annual Report of the Medical Officer.

The County Education Authorities gave their help by allowing the use of their schools as immunising centres and asking the Head Teachers to assist in the distribution of a circular letter and acceptance forms prepared. That the response to this letter and the carrying through of the immunisation was a success was due to the whole hearted efforts, on the childrens behalf, made by these teachers - without their unstinted co-operative assistance the measure would not have escaped failure to attract the percentage required, moreover, some part of the successful response to the National Diphtheria Immunisation Drive in other parts of the County which started before the final stage of Newmarket's immunisation was completed was due to the example that Newmarket set..

The first stage of Immunisation was commenced on October 31st, 1940 - the County Medical Officer attending and allowing the use of his staff. Dr. A. L. Downie, Director, Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge, who gave full technical advice, assisted at the immunisation with members of his staff and technicians. At this first stage the immunisation of 1,030 children (927 school and 103 pre-school age) was commenced.

On this day - to obtain an indication of the general necessity for immunisation - the children in St. Mary's School (where several cases had occurred) and at Exning Road School, (where no cases had occurred) were Schick Tested and had throat and nose swabs taken and examined. At both schools the infant class was not Schick tested or swabbed - it being felt that excessive scientific zeal might prejudice the immunisation acceptance rate. The results obtained from these measures were somewhat remarkable in that no child was identified as carrying Diphtheria Bacilli - yet I had succeeded on July 16th in finding, on clinical grounds, six children in that state from thirteen swabbed. That there was more likely to be cases than carriers with this virulent infection was borne out by the Schick Test results which were as follows:-

| | <u>Intense</u> <u>Reactors</u> | <u>Very</u> <u>Markedly</u> <u>Positive</u> | <u>Positive</u> | <u>Doubtful</u> <u>Positive</u> | <u>Negative</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | +++ | ++ | + | + | - |
| St. Mary's School | 12% | 62% | 10% | 4% | 12% |
| Exning Road School | 11.7% | 64.7% | 16.2% | 6% | 1.4% |

thus at St. Mary's School, where the incidence of several cases allowed some contact and therefore immunity to develop, only 12% were definitely shown to be free from risk, whereas at Exning Road School a mere 1.4% were immune.

The second stage of immunisation was carried out at a months interval, the immunising material used being 0.1 and 0.3 c.c. Burroughes & Wellcome A.P.T. - a final Schick Test was carried out eight weeks later at St. Mary's and Exning Road Schools, where all were found to be negative, results which were much better than those obtained later in another of my Districts where the same doses of a different firms product were used.

1172 children commenced their immunisation in 1940, 87 under 5 years (13%) 887, 5 years but under 15 (68%) had completed the course by the years end and in the early part of 1941 more were completed, so that 165 under 5 years and 102 between 5 years and under 15 brought the percentage immunised to:

42% under 5 years
76% 5 and over but under 15 years.

These figures and estimated percentages refer only to children immunised by the Newmarket Urban District Authority - they do not include children immunised by Local Private Practitioners, neither do they include children previously immunised, as were many of our London evacuees. The actual percentage of children protected was therefore much higher than these figures represent.

It is worthy of note that since immunisation began in Newmarket in October, 1940 only three civilian cases had occurred up to the end of 1941 (all non-immunised persons) - one, an evacuee child, who arrived with Diphtheria; one, a young lady 19 years old, who was seriously ill, and a girl of 9 years (one of three or four who were not immunised in her school) who unfortunately died.

T U B E R C U L O S I S.

New cases and Mortality during 1940.

NEW CASES

DEATHS.

| Age Periods | Respiratory | | Non-respiratory | | Respiratory | | Non-respiratory | |
|----------------|-------------|----|-----------------|----|-------------|----|-----------------|----|
| | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. |
| 15 - 25 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 25 - 35 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |
| 45 - 55 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Total | - | 3 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - |

The 37 cases remaining on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of 1940, together with the corresponding figures for 1939, 1938, 1937 and 1936 are shown below:-

| | Pulmonary | | Non-Pulmonary | | Total | |
|----------|-----------|----|---------------|----|-------|----|
| | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. |
| 31.12.40 | 16 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 23 | 14 |
| 31.12.39 | 19 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 27 | 18 |
| 31.12.38 | 19 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 29 | 18 |
| 31.12.37 | 21 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 32 | 18 |
| 31.12.36 | 20 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 30 | 16 |

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